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LADY HARDINGE OF PENSHURST, C.I.

LADY HARDINGE OF PENSURST, C.I.

VICE-QUEEN OF INDIA
Content

A Tribute to Her Memory

BY

MANHAR KOOVERBA
MAHRANI OF PANNA

WITH A FOREWORD BY
THE LADY WILLINGDON

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FOREWORD

BY THE LADY WILLINGDON

I HAVE been asked by Her Highness the MAHARANI OF PANNA to write a few lines to preface this short biography of the late LADY HARDINGE OF PENSHURST.

The complaint has often been made that the public memory is brief and capricious. But all those, and they were many, who had the privilege of personal friendship with the late LADY HARDINGE will never forget the charm of manner, the high sense of duty, and the breadth of sympathy with which she adorned a great and responsible position, nor the unfaltering courage with which she encountered times of grave peril and anxiety. The still larger number of those who shared in her benefactions will cherish with the warmest gratitude the memory of the lady to whom they are so deeply indebted. And I am confident that the recollection of noble

qualities and great benefits nowhere lives longer in the heart of the people than in India.

Her Highness has wisely refrained from any elaborate eulogy of LADY HARDINGE's life and activities. It was enough to record them. It is, also, I think, enough for me to say that I believe there is nothing which she would have more sincerely valued than this tribute to her memory, paid by a noble lady of the land she loved so much.

MARIE WILLINGDON.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, BOMBAY.

December, 1915.

Lady Hardinge of Penshurst, C.K.

A TRIBUTE ON BEHALF OF THE WOMEN OF INDIA

IT is given to few noblewomen to impress their individuality upon an empire—and upon an empire representing three hundred million souls, differing in blood, temperament, and religion. India has produced its quota of great women, but it is not a land wherein the conditions of life encourage feminine initiative in public affairs. The traditions of the Orient are mainly masculine, and hence it is that, whereas the graces and virtues of the gentler sex are nowhere better understood and appreciated, it has been left to men to make history there. Thus it has been with the line of Viceroys from the time of Warren Hastings. Some stand out in the public memory as being identified with great measures of reform and

progress, with epoch-making events, or with a charm of personality which endears them to the people of India long after their terms of office had expired. But it cannot be said with the most chivalrous consideration that the same enduring qualities attach to the exalted consorts of the Viceroys, gracious and lovable as many of them have been. The distinction is inherent in the representative nature of the viceregal position. An analagous instance would be the difference between an Archbishop and his wife.

There have, however, been in the now long roll of the consorts of Viceroys and Governors those who have risen superior to these limitations, and among these might prominently rank the late-lamented Lady Hardinge. By force of character, as well as charm of personality, and a touch of the divine love and compassion for humanity, she was destined to leave an enduring and endearing mark upon the record of British connection with India. As the *Times of India* stated, in an obituary tribute immediately after Lady Hardinge's death, "no nobler lady ever accompanied a Viceroy to the shores of India. None played her part, in that high position, more heroically and more beautifully. Both as the aid

and helpmate of her husband, in times of extraordinary stress and difficulty, and for her womanly sympathy and concern for the people of this land, Lady Hardinge leaves an imperishable memory. Nor have the Indian people been backward in showing, on the few opportunities that have offered themselves, their heartfelt admiration in return."

Given such a charming and gifted personality, it is of interest to trace back how these qualities were inherited. Let us first enumerate some of these qualities. Mentally and physically they were evenly balanced, for Lady Hardinge was as noted for her beauty of person as for her charm of manner and unfailing tact. Nor did she shine less intellectually, being amongst other things a fine musician. On the violin she especially excelled, and there is a story of her to the effect that during the stormy times through which Persia passed during her residence in Teheran a crisis was averted, like the gloom of King Saul, by the spell of her music. In all these graces Lady Hardinge resembled her mother, Lady Augusta Bingham, daughter of the third Earl of Lucan, a clever and accomplished woman. She herself was a Sturt, her father being the first

Baron Alington. She married, in 1890, Lord Hardinge, of Penshurst, whose mother was another daughter of the third Earl of Lucan. The young pair were thus first cousins on the maternal side.

The Home of the Hardinges

THE Hardinge family have long associations with India, the first Viscount being also (from 1844 to 1848) Governor-General. The present and third Viscount is the older brother of Lord Hardinge of Penshurst, who takes his place-title from the beauty spot of Kent which has now become as famous for its connections with the Hardinges as it has always been for its association with the life of the chivalrous and saintly Sir Philip Sidney. Before passing on to the public career of the late Vicereine it may be as well to give Indian readers a brief picture of the peaceful English country home where she spent two summers of her married life—the one in the stately old rectory, with its beautiful gardens enclosed in magnificent yew hedges, the other in an unpretentious house on the outskirts of the village.

The glory of the neighbourhood is the ancient home of the Sidneys, now in the possession of

Lord De Lisle. Situated on a terrace which lies in the bosom of a pleasant open valley, with green woods about it, and fine broad slopes of sward on either side, stands Penshurst Place, a mellow bulk of gray walls, quaint gables, towers, turrets, and fantastic high-peaked roofs. It retains its Tudor characteristics with few modifications. The northern and principal part, looking out upon the old park, has been well restored. The western front is not all in the same style, but its effect is impressive; while the south front is a quaint medley of buttresses, gables, turrets, and strange projections. Within the inner court is the old banqueting hall, a stately chamber, with the true mediæval air about it, so that, as the yule logs blaze on the ample hearth, one finds it easy to recall the scenes of the past, when at its huge oaken table sat young Philip Sidney, with his brother Robert and his sister Mary. In the gallery hang the likenesses of the two brothers—Philip, a boy of sixteen, and Robert, afterwards Earl of Leicester, about three years younger. In Queen Elizabeth's room there is a picture of the sister, who bears a strong resemblance to the elder boy. She was born at Penshurst Place and spent her childhood there. The friendship and perfect

sympathy between Mary and Philip make one of the idylls of history.

The lovely grounds and woods of South Park, the home of the Hardinges, are supposed to have formed part of the great estate of Penshurst Place. The house itself is of no special historical interest, but is justly celebrated for the wealth of its Indian treasures—superb carvings and metal work, cannons and military arms of all types. To many, however, the object of most interest will be the sword worn by the great Napoleon at the battle of Waterloo. In the wood is a pagoda built to contain the remains of the first Lord Hardinge's favourite charger, the horse which served him so well in his viceregal days. Within the building some lines written by his master testify to the sterling worth of the noble old creature.

The Hardinge influence at Penshurst is very strong, and has fostered a military tradition in the village, so that it is not surprising that practically every man of serviceable age has answered the call of his King and country in the present hour of crisis. The present Viceroy has from childhood commanded a popularity in the neighbourhood exceptional even for a Hardinge, and this admiration

and affection were extended to his beautiful bride during her sojourn there. The unanimous opinion of the villagers was that husband and wife looked more like royalty than any of the great folk with whom they were familiar; and they were probably right, for they made a fine and stately couple in manner and appearance. Needless to say, there was deep gratification when His Excellency identified his 'old home with his choice of title.

The Death of Lady Hardinge

THE tragedy of Lady Hardinge's death a few years later cast a gloom over Penshurst only possible in such a haunt of ancient peace. And it is there that she has found her lasting rest. Her body was brought back to the little church on the hill at Fordcómbe, in the building of which the family were largely instrumental, and was laid under the shadow of the old trees close to the tomb of the Governor-General of India. King George was represented at the funeral by Lord Annaly and Queen Alexandra by Colonel Streatfield. Among other mourners were the Viscount and Viscountess Hardinge, the Hon. Edward and the Hon. Alexander Hardinge, the Hon. Robert Hardinge, Sir Arthur and Lady Hardinge, and the Marquess of Crewe. Queen Alexandra's wreath was accompanied by the following touching words :—

“In loving memory of my beloved Bena Hardinge, whom I shall never cease to mourn and regret. Rest in peace. From her affectionate Alexandra.”

There were also wreaths from Princess Victoria, the Queen of Norway, Princess Louise, Princess Maud, the Earl of Rosebery, Mrs. Whitelaw Reid, the Argentine Minister, and various Indian societies and regiments.

It is impossible to recall in this brief sketch all that was said and done in India and in England on this occasion. The following tributes from the English Press of all shades of opinion and politics may be taken to reflect the universal regard in which she was held :—

The *Times* wrote: “The sudden death of Lady Hardinge must evoke something more than the natural grief of a great circle of friends. Not only here, but throughout the length and breadth of India, and in those foreign countries where he has served as British representative, there will be deep and universal sympathy with the Viceroy in his irreparable loss; for Lady Hardinge had identified herself to an extent which is rare in public life with her husband's brilliant career. She took part in all his successes and

the efforts which achieved them. She shared to the full the trials and dangers of his great position. No one who recalls her calm courage under the supreme trial of that December day in Delhi will doubt how high the strain has been, and it is one of the so-called ironies of fortune that she should have escaped so narrowly the assassin's bomb to die in a nursing-home in London. India has taken heavy toll indeed of the men and women who have gone from this country to serve her. To go no farther back than the two preceding Viceroys, Lord Minto has but lately died before his time, and Lord Curzon has suffered the same desolation as Lord Hardinge. The domestic sorrows of public men are in some sense a matter of national concern. It is one of the sources of British strength that they are not allowed to count in the balance against the steady fulfilment of patriotic duty."

The *Pall Mall Gazette* wrote: "The death of Lady Hardinge of Penshurst is a deep loss to the public life of India, and the Viceroy will receive the utmost sympathy in the calamity which has overtaken him. Lady Hardinge had shown all the qualities that high station can command of her sex. She laboured unceasingly for the great

works of benevolence that are associated with our rule in India and with 'spontaneous efforts of Anglo-Indian Society ; and in the ordeal of the dastardly attempt upon her own and her husband's life the courage she exhibited won universal admiration."

The *Westminster Gazette* wrote as follows : "Widespread regret will be felt at the death of Lady Hardinge of Penshurst, the wife of the Viceroy of India. Many Viceroys of India have been helped in their always difficult task by their wives, but it can safely be said that no Viceroy ever owed more to the devotion of his wife than Lord Hardinge. In the outrage at the Durbar in which he was injured, she herself only narrowly escaped, and her courage on that occasion evoked the warmest admiration, alike in India and the Empire as a whole. We tender to her husband and her children our very sincere and respectful sympathy in their irreparable loss."

But there was more tragedy to follow. Within a year the body of her eldest son was placed at her side. The manner of his death has a peculiar pathos. Severely wounded in the great war, on the French front, he returned to South Park apparently before his condition warranted the

exertion of so long a journey. Be that as it may, it is believed that his great desire to see the grave of his mother, to whom he was devotedly attached, was to some extent responsible for a return of the fever which terminated in his premature and much-lamented death. And so, just outside the door of the little church, wherein hang the hatchments of the family, mother and son repose—both cut short in careers of great achievement. Lieutenant Hardinge was a clever soldier, a noted rider, steeplechaser and sportsman, and, in the words of a Penshurst authority, “an all-round good fellow.”

Lady Hardinge's Public Career

LADY HARDINGE's earlier experiences had well equipped her for the difficult sphere of diplomacy into which she entered on her marriage. At Court she was *persona grata* with the Royal Family, and at all times a great favourite with Queen Alexandra, who was present at her wedding, and, as Princess of Wales, signed the register. The pair indeed were fortunate in the matter of Royal friendships, for the Hon. Charles Hardinge, as he then was, enjoyed the intimate friendship of King Edward VII., on whose direct initiative he was selected to succeed Lord Curzon as Governor-General. During Lady Hardinge's return from India after the deplorable attempt on the life of the Viceroy, the shock of which, in the opinion of her friends, had undermined her health, she was in attendance on Queen Alexandra.

Her first insight into the diplomatic life of a foreign Court may be said to have been a trial of

her great social gifts, for when her husband was appointed Secretary of Legation at Teheran, in 1896, she shared his responsibilities for two years in the stormy capital of moribund Persia. Only those who are conversant with the complexities of Persian politics at that period, before the definite establishment of the Russo-British "spheres of influence" can appreciate the difficulties, and even dangers, which had to be faced and the qualities required to overcome them. These two years were followed by five more at St. Petersburg, now Petrograd, to which capital Lord Hardinge was transferred in the capacity of Secretary to the Embassy. The gaiety and spacious ease of Russian society must have been in pleasing contrast to the somewhat squalid and sinister conditions of Persia. The wider experiences of the great city, however, were invaluable in preparing both the Hardinges for the exalted preferments which were to come. As a leader of the social world Lady Hardinge made a deep impression upon the Court and diplomatic circles of Petrograd. After two years in England, during which time he was Assistant Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, the post of British Ambassador at the Russian capital was given him, and he held it

from 1904 to 1906, a period which witnessed the Russo-Japanese War and the straining of the good understanding between the Governments of Emperor Nicholas and King George, which later years and events have so happily cemented. Then followed another interval of life at home—1906-1910—an interval in which Lord Hardinge occupied the position of Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. The latter year saw the apotheosis of the Hardinges' career, when they went out to represent the King-Emperor in His Majesty's mighty Eastern Empire. The year was memorable for the death of King Edward the Peacemaker, a national loss which led up to that historical and unique event which I shall deal with separately—the Imperial Durbar at Delhi, an event which in itself would ensure Lord and Lady Hardinge a permanent and distinguished position in the historical annals of India.

The Attack on the Viceroy

THE splendid courage and command of nerve shown by Lady Hardinge on the occasion of the attempted assassination of her husband excited the admiration of the whole of India. The event has become historical. The Viceroy was making his state entry into Delhi. What followed may be best described by Lady Hardinge herself. Writing subsequently to Lady Sydenham, wife of the Governor of Bombay, Her Excellency said :—

“Passing down the Chandni Chowk, where the cheering was on all sides, I suddenly felt an upheaval and was thrown forward. When I recovered my place I felt rather dazed and most decidedly deaf with loud singing in my head. The Viceroy turned to me, and said: ‘I am afraid that was a bomb.’ The elephant had stopped. Then he called out ‘*Age,*’ ‘Go on,’ and the procession started again. My impression was of perfect stillness from the crowds until then,

but when we re-started there were voices raised, and I heard 'bravo' among these. I then began noticing more details, for instance, that the howdah back had gone, and that the Viceroy looked pale. I said to him: 'Are you sure you are not hurt?' He answered: 'I am not sure. I have had a great shock, but I think I can go on.' A few seconds afterwards I stretched backwards to be able to see him from the back, and through a slip of the uniform near his right shoulder (the furthest), I could see red flesh appearing. Then I thought: 'Shall I tell him he is wounded, which will frighten him, or take the risk of the harm the jolt of the elephant may do him?' I looked round again, and noticed the legs of a man who was hanging backward and dead. Then I quietly said: 'Do let me stop the procession, as I fear the man behind is dead.' (We had moved a hundred and fifty yards.) He said: 'Of course, we cannot go on under those circumstances.' I stopped the elephant and signed to Colonel Maxwell on the elephant in front. He ran up, and the Viceroy said: 'Can you do anything for the poor man behind?' And I said: 'I would like Colonel Roberts to come. I think

the Viceroy's shoulder is hurt.' Just then the Viceroy had a little convulsion, and he was rapidly losing consciousness. On regaining consciousness, he gave all instructions for the full carrying out of the ceremony. After this, there is nothing to tell, excepting a history of the difficulties of getting him off the howdah, and into the motor, then into the house, and his clothes taken off. He was bleeding profusely from about six wounds. No one was in the house, but the staff did everything and managed him beautifully."

This great display of courage by Lady Hardinge when the outrage was committed touched the hearts of the women of India, and evoked feelings of sincere sympathy and high appreciation, which found expression in the memorial of congratulation on her escape presented to her with something like three hundred thousand signatures. In this address Her Excellency's admirer's stated: "Our warm sympathy goes out to Your Excellency in this bitter time through which you have passed, and we are profoundly impressed by the noble example of fortitude and resourcefulness at the time of supreme trial, which Your Excellency has set to the women of all races and countries. Such an example so given commands universal

admiration, and all women may share in the sense of pride which Your Excellency's exhibition of devoted courage has inspired. The women of India, assembled in meetings held throughout the country, and as individuals, ask Your Excellency's acceptance of this expression of sympathy and loyal affection which unites them in fervent good wishes for your immediate relief from all anxiety and for every blessing in the years to come."

Lady Hardinge, in acknowledging the address, wrote the following graceful and characteristic letter to Lady Pentland, at Madras, from the Viceroy's Camp at Dehra Dun, on 31st March, 1913 :—

"I have to-day received the Address from the Ladies of India, enclosed in an elephant's tusk from Burma, and also a wonderfully beautiful old red lacquer box, which is eventually to hold a book with the signatures of the donors. I most truly appreciate the intrinsic beauty of the gifts themselves ; but first and foremost in my memory will always remain the sympathy and depth of feeling which has, through this Address and in this very beautiful way, been shown to me by numbers of women in India. I want to thank you specially for the interest you have shown, and for the help you have given. But I fear these words

of mine cannot tell you to what extent I am gratefully appreciative."

Before concluding this general reference to Lord and Lady Hardinge's public career, it may be of interest to enumerate the many distinctions which have been heaped upon His Excellency as marks of the esteem in which he is held both at home and abroad. His Imperial Master has made him a Grand Commander of the Bath; a Grand Commander of St. Michael and St. George; a Grand Commander of the Star of India; a Grand Commander of the Indian Empire; a Grand Commander of the Victorian Order; and a number of lesser distinctions. His foreign honours comprise the Legion of Honour, France; the Grand Cross of the Crown of Italy; the Grand Cross of Our Lady of Portugal; the Grand Cross of the Greek Order of St. Saviour; the Grand Cross of the Spanish Order of Charles III.; the Grand Cross of the Austrian Order of Leopold; the Grand Cross of the Danish Order of Dannebrog; the Grand Cross of the Swedish Order Vasa; the Grand Cross of the Swedish Order St. Olaf; the Grand Cross of the Russian Order Alexander Nevski; and the Grand Cross of the German Order of the Red Eagle.

The Imperial Durbar

IN a limited attempt to convey an impression, however inadequate, of the superb pomp and imperial significance of such an epoch-making function as the visit of the King-Emperor to India, I must restrict myself here to a few aspects of the climax and the culmination of His Majesty's progress—the entry into Delhi and the Proclamation of his accession to the Throne. Volumes might be written on the magnificence and coloured splendour of the series of receptions and celebrations which followed one another from the moment of the landing of King George and his august consort at Bombay until they took their departure, leaving behind an indelible memory. The subject is too vast for my purpose, which is to convey some idea of the stupendous burden and responsibility put upon the Governor-General and Lady Hardinge in supervising and directing the receptions and state ceremonies, for King George

had commanded that "the powers, duties and position of the Governor-General shall remain unaffected during His Majesty's visit to India."

The duties commenced for His Excellency with the arrival of the *Medina* at the "Gateway of India." The whole conception of the project was a test which might have tried the strongest nerve. The responsibility was unexampled. As has been well said, "Never had a King of England journeyed so far from his accustomed sphere, and only one, over seven hundred years before, had ever set foot within the confines of Asia. India had suffered the advent of many alien emperors and kings, the European Alexander and the Asiatic Timur, but never yet had any monarch come on a peaceful errand of goodwill and favour." Such a new precedent naturally aroused feelings of apprehension and doubt amongst the advisers and friends of King George, especially as the *Medina* would have to pass through the war area of two powers then at mortal issue—Italy and Turkey. But His Majesty and the Queen-Empress were no strangers to the East, and in the new Governor-General they had a deputy who had been the close friend and trusted servant of that shrewdest judge of men, King Edward.

But the difficulties besetting this Imperial Mission did not end with the safe conveyance of Their Majesties to the shores of India. The arrangements for their reception and enthronement in the ancient capital of the Mogul Empire presented problems which called for the nicest judgment and regard for precedents and prejudices. I cannot do better than present the chief problems to be solved in the words of the official account of the Durbar as published by the famous London house of John Murray, under the title "The Historical Record of the Imperial Visit to India, 1911." The following quotations may suffice:—

"Much interest was given to the great event not only by the fact that even in mythical times there was no real precedent, but also by the general expectation of tangible benefits to be conferred in accordance with ancient custom. To the Viceroy, however, both these features were a cause of much anxious consideration.

"As regards the boons, he was confronted with what seemed the almost insoluble problem of finding something to affect the whole of India equally. By the King-Emperor's personal and special command, His Excellency caused an enquiry to

be made from the local governing officials throughout the country as to what the masses of the people most desired, and under what disabilities they mainly suffered ; but the result even of this careful inquisition indicated very little in the way of common factors.

“ As regards the ceremony, it was necessary not only to meet the requirements of oriental practice and tradition, but at the same time to avoid formalities and symbolisms that would overlap with those of the solemnity already observed in London, when, with every ancient rite, their Majesties had been vested with all the attributes of sovereignty throughout the British Empire. Numerous proposals were made as to the form the ceremony should take, but it was finally decided to restrict it to three simple acts : first, the homage of the Princes and the representatives to the already crowned Sovereign, then the reading in His Majesty's presence of the Proclamation announcing that the coronation had actually taken place, and, thirdly, the presentation of their Majesties to the people and the Army, followed by a formal recognition, the homage of the masses. The place for the ceremony also had to be chosen. One suggestion was for a great concourse on the

Ridge, the ground held sacred to the British rule; another that it should be on the open space between the Jama Masjid and the Fort, where these two noble buildings would have formed a splendid setting. Yet another that was strongly favoured, was for a ceremony of homage to be held in the courtyard of the *diwan-i-am* inside the fortress palace, which would have restricted the proceedings to a privileged few and reduced them to the status of an old Mogul durbar. The only common feature of all these proposals was a recognition of the necessity for holding the ceremony out of doors, in the brightness of an Indian sun. The King-Emperor himself, however, with an intuitive perception of the feelings of his subjects, declined to accept any scheme that provided for the rulers and officials only, as in 1877, or which kept the people at a distance, as in 1903, and insisted that the ceremony of his Presentation should be so arranged as to allow the greatest possible number of all classes to take an actual part in it, and to see him close at hand. The old story of the Mahabharata favoured the adoption of an amphitheatre on 'an auspicious and level plain outside the city,' and a particular spot of the Barari plain to the north-west of the Ridge was

more specially indicated by the sentiments attaching to the Durbars of Lord Lytton and Lord Curzon. This, therefore, was decided upon, though there was nothing left of Lord Curzon's splendid arena but a weather-worn mound of earth and a few relics of old roads."

To all these weighty considerations it may well be believed that Lady Hardinge brought to bear all her womanly intuitions and her exquisite taste. Many of the sumptuous preparations indeed could only have been brought to perfection by feminine inspiration, and to her fell the difficult decision regarding the furnishing and appointments of the Royal suites of apartments. Much care and attention to detail were given to them, and several of the women's institutions in India—the Hindu Widows' Home at Calcutta, the St. Andrew's Home at Kalimpong, the Indian Lady Students of Queen Mary's College at Lahore, and others—were honoured with commands for the embroideries, the cushions, and other decorations. Thus, according to the official description, the Queen Empress's sitting-room and sleeping apartment were lined in *vieux rose* silk, the carpets, which were specially made at Agra, being cream with rose-coloured borders. The King-Emperor's rooms were lined

with silk of Star of India blue, and the carpets, which were made at Bikaner, were of pale grey with light and dark blue borders. The dining and drawing room tents were carpeted from Agra, and the furniture in all the tents was obtained in India. The Empress's sleeping apartment overlooked a small rose garden through a bay window at one end, and all the rooms were warmed by electric radiators as well as open fires.

Lord Hardinge had been with the Royal progress from the time of the arrival of the *Medina* at Bombay. The active association of Lady Hardinge with the great pageant commenced at Salimgarh, where she joined with His Excellency in greeting their Majesties' arrival at the ancient capital of Hindustan, and where her little daughter presented a bouquet of purple orchids to Queen Mary. Thence forward she played her great part in the ceremonies with that stately grace and quiet dignity which made her such a striking personality on all occasions of state.

To follow her further in the story of the Durbar is to describe the collective splendour and impressiveness of the unique event; for unique it was, from the moment when the long white train, with a breast-plate of the Royal Arms on the engine,

slowly drew across the Jumna, and the King-Emperor appeared upon the platform to acknowledge the Royal salute of the waiting troops. Then, for the first time in history, there waved above the Delhi Gate of the Fort the Royal Standard of Great Britain and Ireland, and a salute of 101 guns announced that the Emperor had set foot on the soil of the new capital of India.

The pomp and pageantry of the ceremonial and the various functions incidental to it are chronicled in the numerous official and non-official forms, and are matters of history.

But the culminating event of the whole proceeding was the announcement by the Sovereign himself of the following message to his subjects, which, apart from its historical importance, is worth repeating in this place as the expression of a policy for which Lord Hardinge was mainly responsible.

“We are pleased to announce to our people that, on the advice of our Ministers, rendered after consultation with our Governor-General in Council, we have decided upon the transfer of the Seat of Government of India from Calcutta to the ancient capital of Delhi, and simultaneously, and as a consequence of that transfer, the creation at

as early a date as possible of a Governorship for the Presidency of Bengal, of a new Lieutenant-Governorship in Council administering the areas of Behar, Chota Nagpur and Orissa, and of a Chief Commissionership of Assam, with such administrative changes and redistribution of boundaries as our Governor-General in Council, with the approval of our Secretary of State for India in Council, may in due course determine.

“It is our earnest desire that these changes may conduce to the better administration of India, and the greater prosperity and happiness of our beloved people.”

The King-Emperor's decision had, of course, been kept a profound secret. It came as a surprise to the assembly, and indeed throughout the Empire, and was regarded as a bold stroke of policy by which probably Lord Hardinge's Viceroyalty will be best remembered. In the many festivities and impressive ceremonies which succeeded, Lady Hardinge naturally played her gracious part, but after that crowning episode, of which it may be safely assumed she must have had fore-knowledge, all other details of the Imperial visit will be in the nature of an anti-climax.

Lady-Hardinge's Philanthropic Work

THAT side of her career in India, which even more than her other activities as the consort of the Viceroy claimed her energy and sympathy, was her mission of benevolence in various shapes. In her the philanthropic organisations of the Empire had their most active, practical and zealous worker of the time. There was no channel of philanthropic effort in which Her Excellency did not throw herself with a whole-hearted enthusiasm which affected all who co-operated with her. Her heart was always open to the appeal of the suffering and distressed. She was always the first to initiate or co-operate with every movement for the benefit of her adopted country. The earnestness which she threw into all these benevolent undertakings can best be illustrated by some of the speeches she made and the letters she wrote on the public occasions when she gave her services to assuaging sorrow or helping the weak.

The Children's Day

ONE of the most typical instances of Her Excellency's subordination of self to solicitude for others was given when meetings were held in all parts of India to express horror at the Delhi outrage and congratulations at the escape of the Viceregal pair. There was a spontaneous desire that the sentiments evoked should be given some tangible form of expression, and funds were everywhere subscribed as a thank-offering for their Excellencies' preservation. It was Lady Hardinge who decided the manner in which those subscriptions should be utilised. With characteristic benevolence and imagination born of pure maternal love, she proposed that the money should be used for giving a treat to children throughout the Indian Empire on Lord Hardinge's first birthday after the outrage. That was the 20th of June.

The suggestion was taken up enthusiastically by the whole of India. And yet some difficulties appear to have been raised in the realisation of

Her Excellency's scheme, for these are the words that she wrote on the occasion :—

“I do not wish to abandon altogether my first great desire that all the little children of India should share with me my joy on the Viceroy's birthday this year. I know there are difficulties, and I do not know how it can be done, but I feel that the loyal hearts of the Indian Empire, who have already shown so much sympathy, will in some way or other do what they can to make it possible. I leave it with confidence in their hands, and ask that this year the Viceroy's birthday, the 20th June, may be a Children's Day throughout the whole of India.”

As a result of this appeal, the children of India shared with Her Excellency her joy on the Viceroy's birthday that year. Not only did the cities and towns all over the Indian Empire participate in this unprecedented festival, but thousands of villages also joined in the celebration, and individuals and associations vied with one another in making the festival a memorable success.

The following was Her Excellency's message to the suffering children :—

“My dear children,—I wish to send you a message of affection and sympathy, and to wish

you every happiness on the Viceroy's birthday. I feel for you very much indeed in all the sufferings you are called upon to bear, and hope that the little gift which I am sending to you may bring you pleasure. Many of you to whom my gift comes are orphans, and I, who am a mother, feel specially for you who are motherless or fatherless. There are also those who are in great poverty and affliction, and I would wish to send to each one of you a message of comfort on this day of general rejoicing.

“LADY HARDINGE OF PENSHURST.”

The children of India are not likely to forget easily the Vicereine who wanted them to share her joy. The celebration was absolutely unprecedented in the annals of the country, and perhaps of the whole world; for only a great heart could entertain the idea of giving a treat to the millions of children in the Indian Empire, and only the rare devotion inspired by Her Excellency's heroism and the Viceroy's goodness could realise it with success. It is impossible to describe the festival as it was observed in the various towns, cities and villages of the Empire. I shall content myself by recording extracts from the report of proceedings at one or two places, and trust that

the reader will be thereby enabled to form some idea of how the scheme appealed to the imagination of the people throughout India, and how they laboured to make it a success. Referring to the celebration in Bombay, a local paper said:—

“Slowly the movement gathered popular support, and the rapidly growing momentum attracted those who were somewhat hesitant in the beginning to join. The deliberate plan of the committee to make each school a centre for their work afforded, while obviating any risk, a nice opportunity for initiative and organisation, and putting an individual stamp on their work. As the idea caught the imagination of the children and the public, and as the volunteers discovered neglected schools in the corners of Bombay and roused them to activity, the numbers of school children supplied to the secretaries rapidly grew, and the original provision which the committee had made for 50,000 children had to be increased in a couple of days time, and the Committee had to be ready with provisions of sweets, songs, and photo souvenirs for over 62,000 children, excluding the 6,000 children of the sweepers and scavengers of the Health Department of the Bombay Municipality, to whom the committee supplied

only souvenirs, the members of the 'Health Department having supplied sweets. Thanks to the members of the Health Department for the kindly thought of entertaining these poor children who were left out because they were not receiving instruction in schools.

"The insufficiency of school addresses caused no small trouble to the volunteers of the committee in tracing their localities, as many circular letters addressed to them came back through the Dead Letter Office. The secretaries, however, had made up their mind to satisfy every new legitimate demand. Many Urdu schools were taken on the list at the last moment, and a band of young Mohammedan volunteers, who are members of the Young Khoja United Association, went about the localities with packets of sweets and souvenirs in their carriages to supply these schools that could not be reached by the Postal Department. In one of the reports it is stated that Mr. Mahomed Alli Peerbhai went round the villages of Mahim and Dharani, which is really a village of tanners, in the afternoon of the 20th with sweets and flags to make the children left out happy.

"As nothing could secure the intelligent interest of the pupils so much as telling them why the

occasion was regarded a special day of rejoicing, the teachers and visitors spoke on the significance of the day, and thus it can safely be said that more than a thousand lectures were delivered to the school children on the 20th June in praise of Lord Hardinge and Lady Hardinge, and in offering prayers to the Almighty for their long and happy life and for their continued service in promoting the well-being of India, whose people are by Providence committed to their care; and the true measure of cordial and enthusiastic support of the public could be gauged from the fact that at least 10,000 men and women (including many old ladies, as happened in one of the Dadar Girls' Schools) attended the functions in these schools."

As in British India, so in the India of the Rajas, the event was observed with equal enthusiasm. As a typical instance, I select what was said of it at Indore by its Chief Minister, on behalf of the Maharaja, at a thanksgiving meeting, which was attended by the Agent to the Governor-General in Central India:—

"We are gathered here this evening to give public expression to our sense of gratulation and thanksgiving to Providence for saving the life of

His Excellency Lord Hardinge, Viceroy of India. This is his birthday anniversary, and, as you are all aware, it has been observed in many parts of the country as the Children's Day.

“ The whole of India rejoices that the cowardly and wicked attempt made last December on the lives of the Viceroy and Lady Hardinge failed, that the Viceroy has completely recovered from the effects of the attack, and is now in the best of health and strength, guiding by Divine Grace the destinies of the people committed to his care, and that India has been saved by Providence from a great calamity, which, had it occurred, would have thrown the country's progress centuries backwards. The spirit of impersonal tranquility with which the trial was borne by the Viceroy and his noble wife, both at the time of the dastardly outrage and afterwards, has immensely added to their popularity, and drawn the hearts of the people closer unto them than before. It was in the fitness of things that Lady Hardinge should have conceived the happy idea of celebrating the anniversary of His Excellency's birthday in a special manner, and of consecrating it as the Children's Day. We had a gathering of children in this city of Indore this morning, and similar

gatherings have taken place in other districts of this State. We have all witnessed the glee and joy of the children, and how they have imparted a sense of their innocent mirth to the occasion.

“The children have done their duty to-day, but this birthday celebration would be incomplete if we, the elders, failed to do ours. Hence the present gathering. We have met to offer our united prayers to God for the Viceroy and his noble wife, whose high calm has marked in a memorable manner their great strength. We have observed this day as the Children's Day. What is the import of that? What could have placed children first and foremost in Lady Hardinge's mind when she thought of marking this as the Children's Day? Our first and simplest answer would, I apprehend, be that Lady Hardinge is a woman, and it is natural that women should think of children first.

“That is the lesson for us of this Children's Day, for which we must be thankful to Lady Hardinge. And with the faith of the child let me, as the spokesman of His Highness the Maharaja, on this occasion invite you to unite our voices and send forth our prayers to God for His grace and mercy to the Viceroy on this birthday celebration

in his honour, and call His choicest blessings on Lord Hardinge, his noble wife, and the people whom he loves and who love him as one of their own."

And so the 20th of June, A.D. 1913, will be recorded in the history of India as the Children's Day throughout the land. We ought to be grateful for having seen a day like that at the instance of the noble lady, of whom future generations of our children will learn that her greatest happiness was to share her joy with them on that eventful day—that she was veritably their Guardian Angel!

The Women's Medical College at Delhi

THE Marchioness of Dufferin had, during the Viceroyalty of her husband (1884—1888), conceived the happy idea of organising medical relief for the women of India, especially for the large classes whose religious and social customs forbade them the aid of male doctors. The movement had found a powerful supporter in Lady Reay in Bombay, Lord Reay being then Governor there, and both of them, evincing a specially sympathetic interest in the promotion of hospitals and medical institutions, had, owing to the great popularity they commanded, secured to the project in Western India public recognition and ample financial aid. It may be recalled in this connection that Lord Brassey, the distinguished father of the wife of the present Governor of Bombay, during a visit to Bombay in

his famous yacht, the "Sunbeam," delivered, under the presidency of Lord Reay, a most interesting address on a kindred subject which made a great impression on the public. The Dufferin Fund, as the organisation came to be popularly known throughout India, had thus taken root in the soil, and formed a subject of personal interest to the wives of successive Viceroys. It was through her administration of the Dufferin Fund that Lady Hardinge realised, soon after her arrival in India, the importance of the whole problem of medical relief. Her inquiries into the working of the National Association for Providing Medical Aid for the Women of India quickly impressed her not only with what was being done to meet the need, but with the vast field of work still to be organised. To meet the difficulty, her idea was to train medical women, both Indian and domiciled Europeans, in a separate college entirely staffed by members of their own sex. From this germ was inaugurated the Women's Medical Service for India and the foundation of the Women's Medical College at Delhi. Lady Hardinge herself described the scheme as "her pet child," and appropriately enough the Lady Hardinge Memorial has taken

the form of a subscription fund to complete the building and equipment. A pathos will always attach to the ceremony of laying the foundation stone, for it was in performing it, on March 17th, 1914, that the Vicereine made her last public utterance in India. The speech was as follows:—

“My inquiries into the work of the National Association for Providing Female Aid to the Women of India has already proved to me that the very large field of the Dufferin Fund needed a greater supply of workers, and especially it seemed to me important that we should be able to train medical women, both Indian and domiciled Europeans, in a separate college entirely staffed by members of their own sex. It is unfortunate that up to the present so few Indian girls have come forward to be trained as medical women. On investigating the reasons for this reluctance on their part, I ascertained the facts that many Indian parents, at any rate on this side of India, object to send their daughters to medical colleges primarily intended for male students. At the present time there are eighty-nine female students scattered over the colleges of Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, and Lahore, but very few of these are either Hindus or Mussulmans. The majority of

them are either Parsis, native Christians or members of the domiciled community, and it is obvious that if we wish to extend female medical aid to all classes of the women of India we must increase the number of Hindu and Mohammedan women, who thoroughly understand the ways, the customs and language of the zenana. And again, the female students who will be admitted to this college will be grouped in special hostels according to their religion. There will be one hostel for Hindus, another for Mohammedans, a third for the Christians, and a fourth for Parsis and others, and I am arranging for the careful supervision and direction of these hostels by the college staff. It is with this idea that the principal and the members of the teaching staff will be provided with bungalows in the immediate vicinity of the college and hospital, so that they may give their constant attention both to their pupils and their patients."

In regard to the hospital and nursing institute her views were:—"In addition to improving the training and increasing the supply of medical women for work in India this college will serve another equally useful purpose. I receive frequent requests for trained nurses from medical officers in

charge of the hospitals already established, and medical women have assured me that one of their greatest needs is an increase in the number of really well-trained nurses. The supply of women of this class does not meet the demand for their services, and so severely is the want felt that it handicaps the work not only of the Dufferin hospitals, but also of the general civil hospitals in the country. It is my intention, therefore, that in connection with this hospital and college there shall be a special training school for nurses who will be available for work in all parts of the country. We hope in this way to attract a better class of Indian women to come forward for training as nurses. The college, which is intended for the training both of first-class medical women and female assistant surgeons, will be affiliated to one of the universities in Northern India, and every effort will be made to have it equipped with all the most modern appliances. With this object in view, I have arranged that the Lady Principal-elect shall visit all the best schools in England this summer, and advise us in the purchase of apparatus and teaching appliances. This indeed will be our first consideration rather than that the buildings should be of ornate design.

“ One of the features of the hospitals will be the provision of a number of separate wards for the accommodation of the patients on the family system. I have often noticed the many inconveniences experienced by Indian women owing to their separation from the members of their families when admitted into hospitals where the accommodation consists of larger wards only. I intend, therefore, that this hospital, whilst preserving the strictest purdah, shall be designed for the convenience and comfort of Indian women without necessitating their severance from those who are dear to them.”

The Salvation Army

ANOTHER philanthropic organisation which made an appeal to Lady Hardinge's deep spiritual convictions was the Salvation Army, and she watched with sympathy its efforts for the betterment of the lower classes and criminals. This sympathy was actively shown by her presence at an exhibition and sale of work organised by the Army, which took place in the Town Hall at Simla on 6th June, 1911. The ball room was decorated with flags and flowers; and eight or nine stalls presented an attractive appearance with exhibits of needlework, lace, and drawn thread work. There was a separate stall with products made by criminal tribes, among whom the Salvationists labour with good results, exhibits of silk-winding and tree-planting. On her arrival Lady Hardinge was received by Commissioner Booth Tucker, whose daughter presented a bouquet to Her Excellency.

Lady Hardinge's reply to an address of welcome was in the following sympathetic words, showing that she never held herself above or beyond the grasp of any effort for the amelioration of even the humblest classes of the people:—

“It is a great pleasure to me to be associated, in however small a degree, with the efforts that you and those associated with you are making for the social amelioration of the poor of this country with the destinies of which my own interests and happiness are so closely bound up now and for the next few years. The many-sided activities to which you have briefly referred afford ample testimony to the value of the work you are doing, not only for the material well-being of those who come under your influence, but for the strengthening of their character and for the rescue of those that have fallen. I thank you for the opportunity you have given me of showing my sympathy with your work, and also for your kind expressions towards myself and Lord Hardinge. And I have great pleasure in declaring this exhibition and sale of work to be open to the public.”

The Linen League

A special creation of Lady Hardinge's versatile genius was the Linen League for the benefit of the Indian hospitals. This remarkable league will be better understood, and the spirit inspiring it will be more adequately appreciated, if I give some of Her Excellency's utterances and writings bearing thereupon.

At the first meeting of the Central Committee of the Dufferin Fund held at Government House, in January, 1911, she had said:—

“I should like all those who are engaged in the work of affording female medical aid to realise how keenly and with what interest I shall follow what they are doing. I am sure that we shall all be able to co-operate in endeavouring to develop the objects of these institutions, and I feel very confident that with the valuable help of this Committee the Dufferin Fund will continue to prosper and increase in utility.”

In January, 1912, Her Excellency wrote the following letter to the Press :—

“ I want to appeal for your help towards the Indian Nursing Association. I need not explain to you the value of the work and its object, which must be well known to you. This year there has been a tendency for the subscriptions to fall off, and I am most anxious that it should be known that I am just as keenly interested in that beneficent institution as was my predecessor, and I hope much that it will continue to get the necessary support, without which its activities cannot be maintained. To secure the services of well-qualified and satisfactory nurses, funds are an obvious necessity ; and the public can, as annual subscribers, do much towards this by providing the association with a more regular income. I therefore ask for your kindly co-operation and support for an institution which supplies relief for such an urgent need amongst the Europeans in outlying stations.”

In June, 1912, followed another appeal with special reference to the hospitals, both civil and military, of the Punjab and North-West Frontier Provinces :

“ I have been much struck, during the course of visits to many hospitals in various parts of India,

by the fact that little or no interest is taken by the general public in these institutions. Although they are equipped as to actual necessities, there is an absence of personal and private help given, which is in marked contrast to that found in other parts of the world. I feel sure that an organisation in which everyone could take a small part—in helping to brighten the lot of the sick, to cheer those who work constantly among them by sympathy and interest shown, and to supplement the bare necessities of the sick room with small comforts as well as the extra linen so often asked for, would meet with general support.

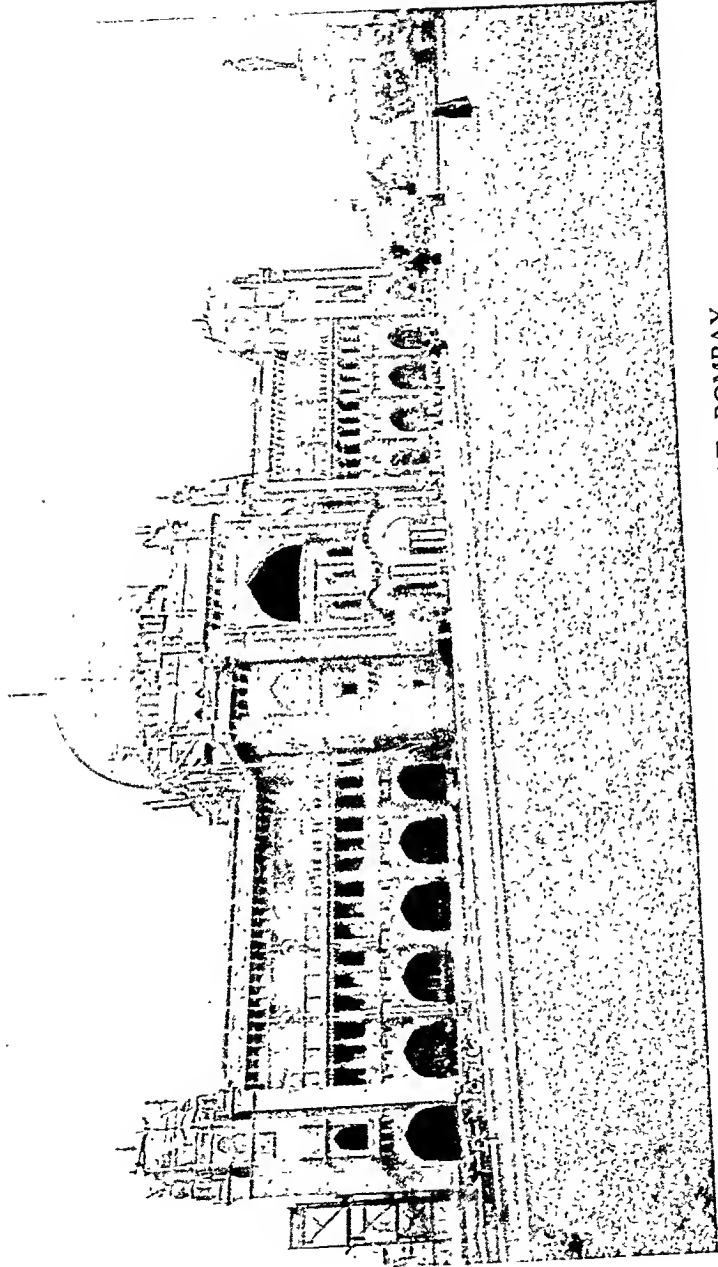
“As the scheme is only in its infancy, and as I am anxious that the league should be of some real assistance, I have decided to begin with the civil and military family hospitals of the Punjab, as well as those of the North-West Frontier Provinces; and I feel I can confidently appeal to the ladies of Simla and the Punjab generally, to assist in this charitable effort.”

Besides subscribers, there were to be associates or members, under the following rules:—

Associates.—To undertake to get nine members and collect the contributions of linen of these members by the middle of September in each year.

Their own contribution to the league shall be the same as the members', or they may choose the alternative of becoming annual subscribers.

Members.—To undertake to supply to the Associates before the middle of September each year, two or more of the articles of linen required for hospitals. These need be according to prescribed pattern, and can be obtained from the local shops or mills, or can be made up by subscribers themselves.



THE LADY HARDINGE HOSPITAL AT BOMBAY.

The Lady Hardinge Hospital at Bombay and the Lady Hardinge Infant Home at Bhopal

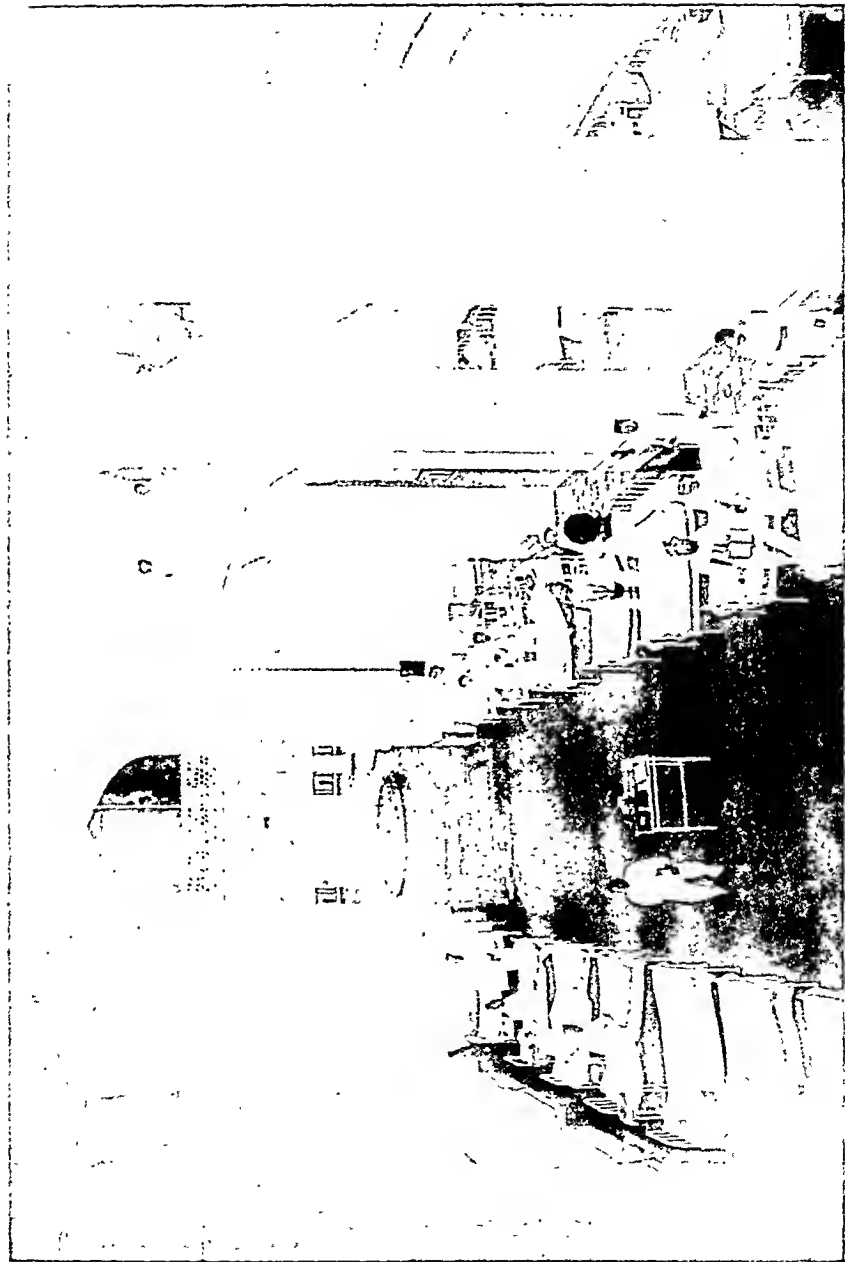
THE universal veneration with which Lady Hardinge soon came to be regarded throughout India is instanced by the association of her name with institutions like those named here. In the cosmopolitan capital of Western India, although distant from the Viceregal centre from which Lady Hardinge's activity radiated, the people of Bombay had already united her name with the hospital provided by them for the sufferers by the present war.

At another end of the country, in the very heart of feudatory India, similar recognition of her humane activity had been given. Bhopal is the principal Mussulman State in Central India. The throne has descended in the female line since 1844, when Sikandar Begum became ruler. Succeeding Begums have carried on its administration with marked success. The present Chief,

Her Highness the Sultan Jahan Begum, succeeded, on the death of her mother, Shah Jahan Begum, in June, 1901, and is the only female ruler in India. Her Highness conceived the excellent idea of founding an Infants' Home at Bhopal and associating it with the name of Lady Hardinge. Her Excellency was accordingly invited to Bhopal for laying the foundation stone. She performed this ceremony on 6th December, 1912, when she spoke as follows :—

“Your Highness, you have mentioned the names of those in whose footsteps I follow, from Lady Dufferin onwards, and I cannot tell you how great a privilege it is to me to be able to do my small part in the work so worthily begun by them.

“In pursuit of their ideals it was some little time before I was able to decide in what channel my efforts could best be directed, but the support which the Zenana Medical College has received has given me assurance that amongst the many suggestions which were laid before me, there is none that meets so fully the more immediate needs of India and India's women at the present moment. But I should like to have this opportunity of saying that alone I should have been quite helpless, and of thanking my kind



A WARD IN THE LADY HARDINGE HOSPITAL AT BOMBAY

friends, which I do from my heart, for their sympathy and support, and for having made the scheme possible by their generosity. For not only is it possible, but I hope and think that its success is assured, and to Your Highness I owe a debt of gratitude which cannot be repaid for your great generosity and your kind co-operation. When I say that its success is assured, I hope no one will think that further contributions will be unwelcome. The more we get, the greater will be our power for good; and it is a field which is practically limitless in extent. As regards the proposed Home for Infants, it needs no words of mine to extol its objects or justify its creation. I hope in the future it will be a very happy home for many little ones, and I feel that Your Highness has paid me a very high compliment in asking me to give it my name."

Her Memorial

EVEN from these fragmentary illustrations of her philanthropic work, it will doubtless be deemed fitting that the shape which could be given to the tribute which a bereaved people naturally desired to pay to her memory should be a tangible expression of that main object of her life which she dearly cherished and ardently pursued.

It must, therefore be noted with satisfaction that at a meeting at Simla, at which it was decided to erect a Memorial to Lady Hardinge, it was resolved that the most suitable form this memorial could take would be the completion of "The Medical College and Hospital for Women and Training School for Nurses," which was initiated and promoted by Her Excellency, and the association of her name therewith. Lady Hardinge little thought, when in the full vigour of her life she utilised her great opportunities for the

creation of a benevolent institution for the relief of the sick and the suffering, that she was raising unto her own memory a monument which shall hand down to posterity the story of a beautiful life nobly lived in a constant endeavour for their amelioration.

Conclusion

If, after the perusal of the foregoing pages, there be anyone inclined to wonder or ask why from one end of the continent to the other the people of India, to whom four years previously Lady Hardinge was not known, mourned her loss as that of a beloved benefactress, the answer may be furnished by these words in which her bereaved husband acknowledged their expressions of sympathy:—
“She loved India and the people of India, the children, the suffering, the poor—none can realise how much. Though gone to her eternal home, her love for India will, I know, remain and bring its blessings from above.”

And these words will also account for the motive which has prompted a woman of India to weave this wreath of a few flowers culled from the garden of Lady Hardinge's beautiful life, in the hope that her noble example may prove a guide to the womanhood of India.